



**SIERRA  
CLUB**  
FOUNDED 1892

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April 16, 2008

Mayor Susan Golding, Chair,  
MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force  
c/o California Resources Agency,  
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311m,  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
Email: [MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov](mailto:MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov)

Subject: Select Proposal 4 and Reject Proposal 2-XA

Dear Mayor Golding and Task Force members:

The Sierra Club, representing over 200,000 members in California urges you to recommend Proposal 4 - a legacy for our coast and ocean – for the North Central Coast Region of the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA).

Sierra Club members throughout this north-central coast care deeply about marine reserves not just for their recreational value, but also as the economic engines of our coastal economies. Numerous studies confirm that marine reserves, when compared to nearby fished areas, have more biological diversity and more fish, including the very large individuals that have been shown to be the most big prolific. Thus marine reserves act as critical suppliers to nearby commercial and recreational fisheries.

The Science Advisory Team has ranked Proposal 4 highest of the three proposals in meeting MLPA guidelines, which means it has the best chance of being effective as a network to protect the biological diversity and fisheries for which our coast is famous. In contrast, Proposal 2-XA is ranked lowest.

In addition, Proposal 4 provides full protection - the level most easily enforced - for outstanding places like the rock formations and deep habitats off Salt Point State Park, the reefs north of Bodega Head, and the diversity hot spot along Fitzgerald Marine Park. Proposal 4 also includes the vulnerable intertidal ecosystem at scenic Sea Lion Cove near Point Arena and the nursery habitat at Duxbury Reef. Ease of enforcement will be critical in order to reap the recreational and economic benefits from marine protected areas. In contrast, Proposal 2-XA is the least easy to enforce and therefore the most likely to fail in both its resource protection and its economic goals. In several areas, Proposal 2-XA simply misses the mark, leaving Duxbury Reef completely unprotected and selecting less ecologically valuable areas for inclusion in MPAs on the Sonoma, Marin and San Mateo coasts.

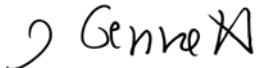
Proposal 4 leaves selected prime fishing areas open and those areas proposed for take limits have low short-term economic costs compared with the MLPA network previously implemented in Central California. Because it was designed carefully, based on the input of diverse ocean users, Package 4 achieves a high conservation value with very low estimated worst-case short-term economic impact to commercial fishing of just 8%.

In contrast, Proposal 2-XA, which scored lower in meeting the MLPA guidelines and is significantly less protective and harder to enforce, carries virtually the same short-term economic cost as Proposal 4. Given the more robust medium and long-term economic benefits from Proposal 4, we believe that Proposal 2-XA is penny-wise and pound-foolish by sacrificing the significant benefits of Proposal 4 for trivial short-term economic advantages.

Our Sierra Club members have enjoyed State and National parklands along the north-central coast for decades. Compared to the other two choices, Proposal 4 includes the highest number marine sites adjacent to coastal parklands, which provides the critical missing link between land and sea ecosystems. In contrast, Proposal 2-XA cuts through Fitzgerald Marine Reserve and needlessly exposes this diversity hot spot.

A wide range of local residents, divers, businesses, scientists, educators and conservationists, supports Proposal 4. In contrast, Proposal 2-XA has a vocal but very narrow constituency and shortchanges the people of California by failing to provide sufficient conservation of critical ecological areas. Please choose Proposal 4 as your preferred alternative, for the benefit of all Californians.

Sincerely,



Gordon Bennett,  
Executive Committee,  
San Francisco Bay Chapter

**Jay Halcomb**

(signature on file)  
Jay Halcomb  
Chair,  
Redwood Chapter

**Melissa Hippard**

(signature on file)  
Melissa Hippard  
Chapter Director,  
Loma Prieta Chapter

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